

SAMPLING OF CAPTEL USER COMPLAINTS FOLLOWING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
INTERIM ORDER FOR THE CAPTIONS DEFAULT OFF RULE

Set forth below are verbatim statements of users of CapTel 800i and 840i IP CTS phones that were documented on calls or via email received by Captel Customer Service Representatives.

Life Safety/Unable to use/Multiple Disability Factors/Aging/Adds Stress/Confusion:

1. Customer's daughter stated, "This is a life or death situation for her... she does not have the ability to remember to push the button... I'm worried that [my mother] will not be able to stay in her home independently." 3/24/13 MI
2. Customer's son stated, "There are users for whom turning on the captions button would be impossible. My 99 year old mother who is profoundly hard of hearing is not going to be able to push that button every time. The money I had to pay for the phone is wasted. She is going to be unable to use it." 3/9/13 NY
3. Customer's daughter responded, "My mother has dementia and she lives alone. We spent 80 bucks for the phone for her and we pay for internet, but now it is useless since she has dementia and forgets to press the button." 4/8/13 FL
4. Customer's daughter stated, "With regard to the FCC ruling on using the captions button, it is very complicated for those who not only don't hear, but have other issues, such as a stroke, to understand these changes, like something simple such as listening to a message. This is very difficult for my 90-year-old mother; as simple as it may seem to someone who doesn't have those impairments in their everyday life, it adds chaos to a simple thing like answering the phone. It's very frustrating for them. I take care of my mother. And I see the frustration she goes through." 4/3/13 CA
5. Customer's wife stated, "I'm sorry to hear this had to happen because for my husband it is hard for him to remember to press the button and he needs these captions. I am not too hopeful this phone is going to be any help to him anymore because this phone used to be very helpful. What a shame." 03/24/13 OH
6. Customer's daughter stated, "What bothers me is that it makes her [CapTel user] so mad that she can't make it work. I've called her, and sat and listened to her breathing for an hour, but she just crossed into another stage of memory loss where she can't remember what she needs to do to see what I say. I don't think my mother will live long enough for this ruling to expire, and these are the last conversations I will be able to have with her. I still call her every day, and I understand what they (the FCC) are trying to do, but it seems logical to me that the hard of hearing tend to be older people, and older people tend to have some

- signs of dementia. This is so upsetting to my mother, and it such a loss to those of us who call her." 4/1/13 CO
7. Customer's daughter-in-law said, "He doesn't remember to push the button, and without captions, he can't hear anything so I can't tell him to push the button. This phone is useless to me now." 3/25/13 CO
  8. Customer's daughter stated, "My father is 92 years old and he will not always remember to turn the captions button on. I ask you this: when they were deciding to do this to people his age did they consider how it would affect them? My father loves this phone and needs this phone. Is there a way for this to be changed at all?" 3/25/13 AZ
  9. Customer's son said, "She is almost 90 years old. When the phone rings, she gets excited. Where she used to just answer and get captions, now she forgets to push the button and just waits for the captions to start. We can hear her breathing, and worry when she does not respond." 3/14/13 CO
  10. Customer's grandson said, "My 94-year-old grandmother just cannot remember to press the captions button. She lives alone and really needs this phone." 3/22/13 CA
  11. Customer's daughter said, "Now about the caption on and off thing, you guys think you were smart to do this. I even put markers on her phone saying this is the button to press. But she is 94 years old and learning new buttons on phones is getting to be too hard for her. You basically sabotaged the whole system by having her press the caption button on. You are ruining the product and the experience." 4/9/13 FL
  12. Customer's wife stated, "I wanted to call and express my feelings about the FCC regulations. I know it's not your fault but I will call everyday if I have to so that I can tell you and the federal government how I feel. My husband is unable to keep his volume bar on the red light like he use to. This phone has become very useless. You people said 180 days but he may not be here around in 6 months to talk to his 6 children and 13 grandchildren." 4/9/13 FL
  13. Customer's daughter stated, "Is there a way the Caption button can be pressed ON permanently? She's 91 years old; she's real forgetful...She'll never remember..." 3/21/13 FL
  14. Customer's grandson stated, "It's not going to work for her, it's a giant inconvenience, if she has to keep turning it on, this is not going to work." 3/20/13 OH

15. Customer's daughter stated, "My father is 86 and mostly deaf and is suffering from some dementia, and if he is going to have to press a button at the beginning of each call, he won't remember to do it. So if that's the case, we are going to have to return the phone." 3/19/13 CA
16. Son stated, "You are dealing with two distinct user groups, young people with hearing issues and elderly people with hearing issues who may also have memory problems as well as trouble learning new things. It would have been very easy for the FCC to be able to make that distinction by age, if nothing else. They could have also made an adjustment to the software that would allow the captions light to blink when a call comes in so that the customer would be reminded to push the captions light for each call. My father is 92 years old. It was enough of a challenge education him how to use the CapTel in the first place. They could have also imposed a small, monthly fee for those who choose to pay it to keep the captions light lit. While I understand the reason for the ruling, I feel it was handled poorly and without much forethought. I will be writing to the FCC and my congressman." 3/19/13 MI
17. Customer's daughter stated, "Who thinks this makes sense? My dad has 1) hearing loss and 2) Alzheimer's. He has no idea what is going on with his phone." 3/1/13 OK
18. Customer's daughter stated, "My mother is hard-of-hearing and has memory problems so it is already hard enough for her to use the phone. She is going to just have so much trouble remembering to turn the captions on every call." 3/14/13 CA
19. Customer's son stated "It's a shame that this has to happen as my mother is not getting any younger and more forgetful. Did they ever think about putting themselves in the shoes of the CapTel users when they made this decision?" 3/13/13 NY
20. Customer's daughter stated, "[the customer] has some cognitive disabilities as well as hearing loss so this is not going to be easy, there has to be a way to override this rule." 3/10/13 PA
21. Customer's helper stated, "He has severe dementia. He lives alone and cannot press the buttons. This is extremely problematic." 3/10/13 IA
22. Customer's son responded, "She has dementia and doesn't remember to press buttons so we'll see how this goes." 3/10/13 NY
23. Customer's wife wrote, "My husband is profoundly deaf, but also has mild dementia and the extra step was too confusing for him. The captions were

extremely helpful for communication by telephone, but the extra step was upsetting to him and he stopped using the phone." 3/9/13 FL

24. Customer's daughter stated, "My 92 year old father uses this phone, and along with his severe hearing loss, he has a difficult time remembering to do new things. I am afraid he will think his new 840i phone is broken or not working properly if the captions do not come on automatically when he forgets to push the button each time he uses it. It would be nice to have a button that would lock on for those who really need it and may not be able to remember to push it for each use." 3/6/13 WA

25. The customer stated, "How in the world am I supposed to remember to press that button every single time? I am 88 years old and my memory is not that great. I am worried I will miss so many calls because I don't remember to push that button...The prompt message will help but it will not replace the convenience and security of having Captions always on. This will be one more thing I need to think about and I just feel this will cause some more stress and I don't need that." 2/27/13 FL

Lives Alone/Only User/Always Needs Captions/Frustration on Lack of Captioning Access:

26. Customer's daughter stated, "My mother lives by herself and she is the only one who uses the phone. She has a hard time remembering to turn the captions on all the time. This is frustrating and it is going to get to the point my mother will not use the phone at all anyone. Is that what the FCC wants? Do you want people to stop using the phone? That would be a shame if that happens. My mother loves the phone but this just ruined it." 3/22/13 IA

27. Customer stated, "I find that when I walk by my CapTel phones at home I look at them in disgust as I see the caption button not lit. It irritates me so much. It is like a symbol that something valuable has been taken away from me, although technically it has not. I am profoundly late deafened and have relied on my CapTel phones for 100% of my calls. But now the access of the phone feels like it has been compromised, and it has almost made me disgusted enough to not use the phone. It may sound like an exaggerated synopsis but it is reality. I can't think of anything else I own or have ever owned that when you turn on the accessible feature it goes off and doesn't stay on. Why make an ~accessible phone" inaccessible by forcing the user to make it accessible each and every time they use it?" 3/30/13 WI

28. Customer stated, "This is really burdening. I'm a single person living alone. The FCC should see if there's a huge difference between this ruling and prior use because I suspect strongly that most people who have a captioned phone need captions and very few other people in the household like when other people are

visiting, like at Christmas, no one wants to use that phone. They can't stand it. Normally hearing people will not use the captioned telephone. They don't want to use the CapTel. I think something you people should do is send out a questionnaire or survey to see how many households where there are people who are hearing that would use the phone. As a deaf entrepreneur, I want my clients to contact me as a person doing services and not a deaf person. I think it's crazy. Every time I use the phone it's another barrier, and to me that's not equal access. I can't believe they can put this in place without asking the public. It has a very negative connotation for the CapTel users because it implies they are the source of fraudulent use by having a CapTel phone. By having a phone I can use it. That is outrageous. It is more than pressing a button. It has pressed my buttons." 3/6/13 – VA

29. Customer stated, "I hate the changes. I hate the fact that I have to remember to push the caption button every time I pick up the phone! I live by myself so it is not an issue for anyone else in the house. I don't understand why there is a rule for hearing people when the phone is designed for people without hearing." 3/25/13 MI
30. Customer wrote, "I have been thinking about the requirement for pressing the captioning button before any call. I am the only person using this phone at work and at home. Why should I have to press the captioning button? I do not like the delay. There is more of a delay, and it is awkward to not be able to say hello and tell the person on the other side of the line, 'Sorry, excuse me, you have to hold for a minute while the telephone is kicking in.' I really like the functionality of leaving the captioning button on at all times. Please do not take this functionality away. This will make the phone not as good as for hearing people." 3/25/13 VA
31. Customer stated, "That's really annoying when you're the only person who uses the phone. I am the only person who uses this phone in my office. I could see if you were in an environment where you shared the phone with others, but that isn't the case for me." 3/26/13 MI
32. The helper stated, "This is very inconvenient, especially since she doesn't get technology. Isn't there someone I can talk to about this or getting her an exception or something? She lives all alone and depends on this phone. She always forgets to turn on the captions." 3/18/13 DE
33. Customer stated, "I wish the FCC did not do this; I can't see all that well and will try to count the buttons to find the Captions button. Please get them to change their minds; they don't understand how much they've hurt us with this and all to save a few pennies!" 3/8/13 NJ

34. Customer then stated, "But nobody else uses this phone, just me. I count on this phone as it's all I have to communicate. I don't think I can use the phone now, it's just too complicated for me." 2/28/13 PA